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## CHRIST'S INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THE TWO SWORDS.

We noticed long ago the work of Prof. Ripley on the Gospels, but had no space for extracts on the vexed passages (Matt. 26: 52—54. Luke 22: 33—38, 49—51.) relating to the use of deadly weapons in defence of himself and his disciples. Our author's remarks are the best we have ever seen on the subject, and elucidate in few words what we conceive to be the real meaning of our Saviour.

*"He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.* Severe calamities and trials awaited them in his service; and it became them to be making calculations to meet much hardship and ill-treatment. They ought to prepare themselves to meet with distresses, just as a man going on a journey, ought to provide himself with a purse, and with provisions, and just as a man, expecting to go among deadly foes, would procure himself a weapon of defence. *They ought to be armed at all points;* for dangers were now about to thicken around them. 'You are going to encounter enemies; difficulties will attend every step of your progress, and you must be prepared accordingly. Make all necessary preparations,—become thoroughly prepared, prepared to encounter enemies: not, *literally*, buy a sword; but, as a man armed with a sword is prepared to encounter enemies, so be *you prepared to encounter enemies.*'—The troubles which would mark their future course, were now about to begin; and they ought to be arming themselves for the conflict. The language is figurative, &c.

38 v. *Here are two swords.* The disciples did not understand Jesus; they thought he was speaking of *real swords*. Possibly they were in so agitated a state of mind as scarcely to consider what he meant; and they hastily replied, that they had among them two swords. But after all the instructions they had received from him, and their knowing how uniformly mild and peaceable was his character, and how abundant was his use of figurative language, they ought, it would seem, to have instantly perceived that he did not advise them to purchase a sword, *literally speaking.* *It is enough.* This was an expression used among the Hebrews,—when a person wished to show disapprobation. It is as if Jesus had said, *No more on this subject; cease.* The same phrase in reality occurs in Deut. 3: 26, (Let it suffice thee; speak no more, &c.) where its meaning is obvious.—*Shall we smile?* &c. They recollect probably, but wholly misapprehended what Jesus had said in v. 36.—*Suffer ye thus far.* Our Lord conveyed a strong rebuke to Peter who had violently used the sword. His language might be thus expressed: *Desist ye; thus far is already too much,—proceed no further with the sword; put it up.*

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**HOW WAR BEGINS.**—'It is very like the quarrels of children. I recollect well when the great boys used to set the little ones to fighting, that they might enjoy the fun. It was necessary only to put a chip on one boy's head, and dare the other to knock it off. No sooner said than done. Off goes the chip, and down comes the blow; and now the little heroes maul each other, and pull hair, to the great delight of mischief-loving spectators.'